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READING IN THE TOTAL SCHOOL CURRICULUM.

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SOME WAYS TO INCORPORATE THE TOTAL SCHOOL FACULTY INTO A PROGRAM DEDICATED TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF READING ARE DISCUSSED. FOR TOTAL FACULTY INVOLVEMENT, THE FOLLOWING ARE ESSENTIAL--(1) GENUINE INTEREST IN AND SUPPORT OF A SCHOOLWIDE READING PROGRAM BY THE ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISORY STAFF, (2) INVOLVEMENT WITH THE CLASSROOM TEACHERS SO THAT THEY RECOGNIZE THEIR IMPORTANCE TO THE PROGRAM AND SO THAT THEIR IMMEDIATE AND SPECIFIC PROBLEMS ARE GIVEN ATTENTION, AND (3) REALISTIC AND EFFECTIVE INSERVICE EDUCATION. THE STUDY SKILLS ARE CATEGORIZED, AND FIVE PRINCIPLES FOR TEACHING THEM ARE GIVEN. A GUIDE TO READING SKILLS IN THE SUBJECT AREAS IS GIVEN IN CHART FORM. REFERENCES ARE INCLUDED. THIS PAPER WAS PRESENTED AT THE INTERNATIONAL READING ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE (SEATTLE, MAY 4-6, 1967). (RH)

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Involving the Total School Faculty

Session VI - Reading in the Content Areas -

"Reading in the Total School Curriculum"

For many years, it has been commonplace for reading specialists to list as one of the basic principles of reading instruction the following credo: "There is no one best program or method for teaching reading. Each program must, of necessity, be different, depending upon such significant factors as the individual pupil's abilities and needs, the strengths and weaknesses of the teachers, the purposes and objectives of the administrative and supervisory personnel, the materials available, and the interests and pressures of the community." In his evaluation of the twenty-seven first grade reading studies sponsored by the U.S. Office of Education in

1964-65, Russell Stauffer summarized his reactions as follows: "I have become acutely aware of one tidy generalization - there is no one method of teaching reading. Regardless of the criterion used, there is no one method and this is so in spite of the tragic consequences of internal dynamism that some so-called methods have sought to advance - tragically, eccentrically, and captivatingly, ... no approach has overcome individual differences or eliminated reading disability." (1)

The more one reads about various types of reading programs and observes and evaluates programs in action, the more one becomes convinced that the ultimate success of any program is dominated by three factors. These are (1) the amount of time specifically devoted to the teaching of reading, with special emphasis upon the direct and systematic teaching of skills; (2) the moral and material support given to reading instruction by the administrators and supervisors responsible for the program; and (3) the awareness of content area teachers that they have a responsibility to extend and refine the reading skills of their students. However, this third factor does not imply or suggest that content area teachers are reading teachers per se, or remedial reading specialists.

To involve the total faculty in the improvement of reading, the following three conditions must be met:

1. Genuine interest and support of a school-wide reading program by the administrative and supervisory staff
2. Concentration on the classroom teacher's immediate and specific problems
3. Realistic and effective in-service education.

Mention Checklist for the Evaluation of Reading Programs

Support of the Administrative and Supervisory Staff

What does the administrator need to consider in initiating or extending a total reading program? Nila Banton Smith has offered the following suggestions: (though these suggestions are in reply to administrators who wish to start reading programs in the secondary school, they appear to apply equally well to the elementary level)

"1. The administrator should have some background in reading gained through attending meetings and conferences dealing with secondary reading, and as a result of his own reading of recent books and articles on this subject.

from Corrective Reading in the High School Classroom Perspectives in Reading, No. 6 I.R.A.

2. The administrator should be enthusiastic about starting a reading program and confident of its success. He should take leadership in providing interest-stimulating activities such as those suggested in the appendix to this book (i.e., Corrective Reading in the High School Classroom, Perspectives in Reading No. 6, International Reading Association).

3. The administrator should make budgetary provisions for purchasing extra reading materials.

4. The administrator should schedule time for teaching reading except in schools where team-teaching is being used. In such schools, teams of teachers schedule the time with the approval of the administrator.

5. Support of the entire staff should be enlisted,

6. Support of the students and their parents should be obtained.

7. The undertaking should be a cooperative one in which all members of the faculty participate in planning the program from the beginning.

8. While the plan is cooperative, the responsibility for developing the program should be given to one person: the reading specialist, principal, curriculum director, classroom teacher, or someone else who is interested and competent.
9. The person to whom the above responsibility is given must be trained in reading.
10. When ready to start the program, care should be taken to make sure that each person involved knows what his responsibility is.
11. The administrator must be ready to accept small beginnings. A well-rounded reading program takes time to develop. The administrator needs to keep enthusiasm at a high ebb, but he often will find it necessary to temper enthusiasm with patience."

Read this Reference

* It must be emphasized that the chief school administrator (i.e., the principal) sets the tone for the reading program. His interest and concern in better reading permeates the entire program. His sensitivity to the needs of his staff, and realistic appraisal of the total school-community environment leads to the enthusiastic cooperation of all concerned. Above all, he provides the leadership necessary for the total involvement of the faculty. According to Ruth Strang, "The aim of the administrator is to provide the experiences every pupil needs to improve in reading." (A list of "Do's" and "Don'ts" for the administrator is supplied by Dr. Strang on pages 77-78 of The Improvement of Reading.)

2nd. topic

Attacking Immediate, Specific Classroom Problems

The following question was asked of elementary teachers taking graduate courses in the teaching of reading at Hofstra University during the Spring term, 1967: "What aspects of the teaching of reading concern you most?" The five major areas in order of importance were:

1. Grouping
2. Seat work activities
3. Classroom diagnosis
4. Teaching of phonics
5. Helping the slow learner.

The same question was asked of secondary teachers. Their responses in order of importance were:

1. Critical interpretation
2. Working with problem readers in the classroom
3. Vocabulary improvement
4. Improving reading in the content areas
5. Grouping.

* Implicit in the above informal survey is that the administration must be aware of these immediate needs and be ready with solutions for these problems. Classroom teachers will not respond to vague generalities. They want answers to problems they meet in the classroom every day.

* It has been the writer's experience that content area teachers can contribute most to the improvement of reading by emphasizing the study skills. Basically, the study skills are those reading skills in which the primary aim is to obtain information. In a very helpful New York City Curriculum Bulletin, these skills are referred to as "reading for information, study and research." Of all the reading areas, improvement in the study skills seems to relate most directly to improvement of class work, resulting in higher grades. Thus, both the student and teacher can see benefits almost immediately. These skills may be categorized as follows:

1. Skills of locating information

   (a) Using parts of the book (author's organization of materials,

preface, introduction, table of contents, index, glossary, etc.)

(b) Use of dictionary skills

(c) Use of encyclopedias, almanacs, atlases and other references

(d) Reading maps, charts, graphs, diagrams, etc.

(e) Use of library techniques

2. Skills of evaluating information

(a) Reading with a critical attitude

(b) Using several sources to evaluate materials

(c) Judging author's competency

(d) Distinguishing between fact and opinion

(e) Learning propaganda techniques

(f) Evaluating relevancy of information to topic being studied

3. Skills of organizing information

(a) Note-taking

(b) Classifying facts and ideas

(c) Arranging ideas in sequence

(d) Knowing outline format

(e) Knowing how to outline

(f) Techniques of summarizing

4. Skills of retaining information

(a) Use of Survey Q3R (See Spache, Toward Better Reading, pp.345-346, for a good summary and evaluation of this study technique) (5)

(b) Systematic study vs. cramming

(c) The need for re-reading

(d) Note-making vs. note-taking as a memory aid

5. Adjusting rate to purpose and to the difficulty of the reading selection

(a) There is no such thing as rate in isolation. It must always be considered as rate of comprehension

(b) A good reader must have at least four basic rates of reading:

(1) Skimming (skipping with judgment)

(2) Rapid reading (timed reading exercises - no skipping of material)

(3) Intensive reading (the art and necessity of re-reading)

(4) Recreational reading rate.

In teaching the study skills, five basic principles should be kept in mind. They are:

1. Instruction in the study skills should begin at that grade level in which the student begins to read extensively in the content areas. In most instances, this will be Grade 4.
2. Instruction in the study skills should be spread through several grades (i.e., Grades 4 - 12) rather than concentrated at one grade level. The teacher should think of the study skills as a "spiral curriculum" in which each major skill is re-emphasized at each grade level, using more difficult material and proceeding at a faster rate.
3. It should be noted that each major study skill has levels of difficulty. The teacher should begin with the most obvious level of the skill and work toward the most difficult. For example, there is a world of difference between skimming a selection to find a name or date, and skimming a chapter to get some idea of the author's pattern of organization.
4. Factual material, rather than narrative or story-type, is more conducive to effective instruction in the study skills. Such factual materials should have a minimum of word recognition problems for the student. The teacher's purpose is to teach a study skill, not to be bogged down in word recognition problems.

Avoid materials that are at a student's "frustration level."

5. Though special materials and exercises may be used to teach the study skills, application should be made to the content areas. For example, teaching Survey Q3R is practically valueless unless application is made to a content area textbook.

Another effective way of involving the total faculty in a reading program is to make them aware of the major skills of reading instruction and to show that these skills are involved in practically all the subject areas. A very helpful guide to reading skills in the subject areas, including specific developmental lesson plans pertaining to many of these skills, can be found in the New York City Board of Education publication, Reading in the Subject areas, Grades 7-8-9. (6) This curriculum bulletin lists the skills as follows:

(The "x" under each subject area indicates that the reading skill is relevant to that particular subject.)

(See next page for chart.)

Guide to Reading Skills in the Subject Areas

Reading Skills	Subject Areas				
WORD RECOGNITION	Language Arts	Social Studies	Science	Math.	Industrial Arts
1. recognize basic sight words	x				
2. use phonetic analysis	x				
3. use structural analysis	x				
4. use contextual clues for word meaning	x	x	x	x	x
5. use dictionary to check meaning	x	x	x	x	x
COMPREHENSION					
1. understand word and sentence meaning	x	x	x	x	x
2. find main idea and related details	x	x	x	x	x
3. organize and classify facts	x	x	x	x	x
4. perceive sequence of ideas	x	x	x	x	x
5. draw inferences and conclusions	x	x	x	x	
6. understand problems	x	x	x	x	x
7. form judgments	x	x	x	x	
8. predict outcomes	x		x	x	
9. read critically-distinguishing fact from opinion	x	x	x		
10. read for appreciation	x				
11. understand relationships	x	x	x	x	x
12. follow directions	x	x	x	x	x
WORK STUDY					
1. understand parts of a book	x	x	x	x	
2. understand the index of a text	x	x	x	x	
3. use of the dictionary	x	x	x	x	
4. use of the encyclopedia	x	x	x		
5. understand library techriques	x	x	x		
6. interpret maps	x	x	x	x	
7. understand charts	x	x	x	x	x
8. interpret graphs	x	x	x	x	
9. understand diagrams	x	x	x	x	x
10. adjust reading rate-skim	x	x	x	x	x
11. select and evaluate information	x	x	x	x	x
12. use techniques of retention and recall	x	x	x	x	x

Realistic and Effective In-Service Education

A group of reading specialists enrolled in the writer's course in the "Supervision of Reading Instruction" offered at Hofstra University during the Fall semester, 1966, prepared a statement of basic principles for in-service education in reading. All involved were actively engaged in organizing and participating directly in their school's in-service programs. The I.R.A. publication, Conducting In-Service Programs in Reading, was a most helpful reference in the preparation of these principles.(7)

These principles are:

1. In-service education must be responsive to the needs of the school or district. These needs could be established through:
   a. surveys, including studies of the community
   b. questionnaires to ascertain teacher needs
   c. classroom observations by principals and reading specialists
   d. requests by teachers.
2. In-service education must have the whole-hearted support of the administration. The administration must indicate in every way possible that reading instruction has been given top priority:
   a. in terms of participation of administrators in workshops, special courses, conferences
   b. in terms of personnel made available to contribute to the reading program
   c. in terms of financial support.
3. In-service training should stress the practical aspects of the teaching of reading. For example:
   a. preparation of informal tests and other materials for particular grade levels
   b. specific grouping procedures

c. special activities and materials for the slow learner.

4. In-service training should stress complete involvement of those participating:

   a. Participants should help in establishing the goals of courses or workshops

   b. participants should help in planning the content as well

   c. groups should be small.

5. In-service training should include demonstrations, observations, pre-conferences, and post-conferences as integral parts of all in-service courses:

   a. Reading specialist must have the skills and experience for successful demonstration lessons

   b. observations of master teachers should not be limited to one session. Some activities need to be observed for several consecutive sessions.

6. Evaluation should be an on-going concern in all in-service training:

   a. evaluation of courses, workshops and conferences etc., by supervisors and teachers

   b. yearly testing of pupils

7. In-service training should - for obvious reasons - be conducted during released time, rather than after school hours. Time must be provided not only for courses, but also for visitations, conferences, etc.

8. New Teachers will be hired with the understanding that their in-service training will be an important part of their responsibilities. This will be provided according to school and personal needs.

9. In-service training - especially for new teachers - should be defined not only in terms of workshops, courses and institutes,but also

in terms of contacts with principals and reading specialists. More and better supervision by those who are well-versed in the problems of teaching reading is the sine qua non for any program aimed at the improvement of reading instruction.

10. In-service training should have as its final goal the improvement of instruction in <u>all areas</u> of reading.
11. There must be a greater awareness of the fact that individual differences exist among teachers as well as they do among children.

To supplement the above, Robinson and Rauch have offered the following suggestions:

1. An in-service program that threatens the security of staff members cannot succeed. The consultant must be sensitive and realistic in his demands upon the teaching staff. Programs that require too much of the teacher's "free" time are likely to breed resentment and failure. At the same time, participants in the in-service program should have the opportunity to share in both the planning and the evaluating of the program.
2. Programs that try to accomplish too much in too short a time will not have lasting results. It is better to concentrate on one grade level or one subject area at a time rather than attempt to reorganize the entire system-wide program in one year. A successful program in a limited area will mean much more in the long run than questionable progress on a broad scale.
3. The active support of teachers who are reputed to be extremely capable instructors and who are respected by other teachers greatly helps the reading consultant in organizing and conducting the in-service program.

4. In-service reading programs that involve persons who teach in a subject area must reflect the goals and objectives of that area. To help ensure fuller cooperation from content-area teachers, the consultant should use the materials of their subject to demonstrate the application of specific reading skills. (8)

To summarize: the chances for involvement of the total school faculty in a reading program will be determined to the extent that the following conditions are met: (1) the teachers recognize the need for such an effort; (2) realistic goals are set; (3) the necessary teaching materials are available; (4) in-service instruction is down-to-earth and directed towards immediate classroom problems; and (5) school leaders are sincerely and actively devoted to the cause of reading improvement on a school-wide basis.

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